



CALIFORNIA WING CIVIL AIR PATROL QUARTERLY SAFETY BULLETIN

THIRD QUARTER, 2005

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2005

WING COMMANDER'S CORNER By COLONEL VIRGINIA M. NELSON

This past August California and Nevada held a joint cadet encampment at Camp San Luis Obispo. Almost 300 members (mostly cadets) spent eight days working and training at this strenuous activity. The encampment commander, LtCol Tony Upton and the rest of the senior members and cadet staff are to be complimented for maintaining a safe environment for the entire encampment. One of the goals of each encampment is that cadets go home better than they were when they arrived. "No broken cadets" is stressed.

The CAWG cadet section has extensive experience in running safe activities. Written guidelines were developed to ensure that safety is an integral part of the program. Encampments have a designated Safety Officer who reports directly to the Encampment Commander.

The staff arrived three days before the encampment start. All buildings were inspected for potential safety hazards. Burnt out light bulbs were replaced and office computer cords were taped down. The staff had classes, which included ways to prevent accidents, i.e. no running on the stairs, importance of hydration, use of road guards, fire drills and blister checks. As CAP vans arrived at encampment, they were inspected to make sure they were safe. Only two had minor problems and these were fixed right away.

There were additional safety briefings for everyone prior to two potentially dangerous activities - flying and shooting. All cadets were briefed by the crew of the Army CH47 helicopter prior to flying. They learned about flight line and helicopter safety and were given earplugs to protect their hearing. At the rifle range, the cadets had extensive classes on firearm safety and range procedures prior to handling the M16s. Besides the qualified range master, there was a range safety officer and trained senior members closely supervising the cadets at all times. The cadets listened and followed the rules. This was a serious training activity. Cadets were allowed to opt out if they did not want to shoot but most wanted to try and many did quite well. There were no accidents or incidents during either activity.

But, would you believe that a cadet was injured while making his bed? Cadets are instructed in proper bed making procedures. Sheets need to be pulled taut. One cadet, while tucking his sheets, got a splinter stuck under his fingernail from the particleboard under the mattress. This wasn't just a little splinter but a big, painful one. The Air Force medic suggested the cadet be taken to an urgent care facility to have it removed. We did. The doctor placed the splinter in a plastic jar and that cadet got to take home a unique souvenir.

The encampment is a rigorous physical activity. Cadets march to most activities. Many cadets had relatively new boots. These factors combined to create our biggest safety problem - BLISTERS. This year's encampment had more and bigger blisters than normal. Our Air Force medic spent a lot of time treating blisters and doing foot care education. Some cadets were switched out of boots and into tennis shoes for a few days to allow healing. Fortunately all

cadets were able to march in the graduation parade. As an after action item it was decided that next year cadets, their parents and squadron commanders need to be better informed on the necessity to break in boots prior to encampment. The cadet section is working on a way to make this happen.

An encampment by its very nature poses many safety challenges. What is remarkable is that CAWG has an outstanding track record for encampment safety. There are written guidelines (training manuals and Standard Operating Procedures) designed to promote safety. The encampment staff - senior and cadet - is trained in safety prior to the first basic cadet's arrival. Cadets are briefed on what to expect and how to perform safely. Senior members constantly stress doing activities safely and are present at all times. Equipment and vehicles are checked. Any one can report a safety problem. The encampment has had a resident medic, which allows minor problems to be treated before they grow.

In other words, there is a safety culture present at encampments. This safety culture developed over time and is now fully integrated into the encampment experience. Cadets and seniors are educated to think safety and act safely. Squadrons need to develop a safety culture if one does not currently exist. Start by thinking and talking about how to make your squadron safer. Brainstorm and write the ideas down. Incorporate safety briefings at the start of activities. Have a designated safety officer and make all participants aware that they should speak up if they see something unsafe. Conduct routine safety inspections of facilities and equipment. After an activity conduct a debriefing and discuss if safety procedures could be improved. Squadron Commanders need to work with their safety officers to develop and maintain a safety culture. All members need to support and encourage safety within their units.

Safety Course at Wing Conference

Please be sure to make time to attend the Safety Section at Wing Conference on Saturday Morning from 10:30 to 12:00

See you there.

A special thanks to

Maj. Dee O'Sargent, Project Officer
and
1st Lt. Cody Osburn, Seminar Director

for putting on an excellent Group 7 Safety Seminar!!!

Submissions for newsletter are always welcome.
Contact Chief Bob Rodeymeyer @ chiefrodey@comcast.net
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15-Minutes of Fame by Mark McKibben

We've all read many stories about in-flight emergencies. To me, the scariest ones involve in-flight fires. On July 11th, 2005, I got the chance to experience first-hand what it's like to execute an emergency forced landing resulting from an in-flight fire, something I've been practicing since 1997, when I started flying, and one I had hoped I'd never have to do for real.

I own a 1999 Turbo Cessna 206 which I fly often and have accumulated about 1,300 hours in the left seat. Never fully trusting anything mechanical, I often practice short approaches from my home field in Van Nuys. On the Saturday before July 11th, I performed 6 short approaches - with the throttle set to idle. That day, I resolved to keep doing short approaches until I had performed three in a row that were acceptable. Unknown to me at the time, I was going to need those skills in the very near future!

July 11th started out with no hint of the troubles to come. I had scheduled meetings in Lompoc that day and the flight would take about 50 minutes from Van Nuys. It was a "severe clear" day and I departed Van Nuys VFR. Takeoff was uneventful and I pointed the nose at San Marcus for what I thought would be a very routine flight.

Fifteen minutes later, as I was crossing over Moorpark at 6,000 feet, I noticed black smoke beginning to swirl around inside the cockpit. At the same time, I picked up the smell of something burning. My brain locked up for about 5 seconds as the adrenaline began pumping. I realized that I had to terminate the flight immediately. Even though I was only about 8 miles from Camarillo, I knew that I was not going to be able to glide to an airport. At this point, my training and recent practice kicked in. I started running through the engine fire emergency procedures that I had memorized long ago.

Within about 30 seconds, I had completed shutting off the mixture and fuel tank selector switch. The engine started to windmill. The smoke in the cockpit began clearing, so I decided to leave the master switch on to keep the radios and transponder running. I was on already on flight-following with SoCal approach and I had an assigned transponder code for the flight to Lompoc. I got on the radio and declared an emergency. The controller asked if I needed vectors to an airport and I advised him that I was planning to land the plane immediately. I also asked that emergency services be contacted to get them started on the way.

After nailing the airspeed at "best glide", I began looking around. At 6,000 feet, I figured that I had no more than 5 minutes to land the airplane at a descent rate of about 800 feet per minute. I didn't know if the fire was completely out, so I scanned for a place to set down that I could get to in a hurry. Luckily, there was a dirt road in the middle of a large field that was well within glide range of the airplane. It looked like a tractor road and it was very straight. The road was nice and long, although it was pretty narrow. There were no telephone poles or other obstacles that might clip the wings. There were no vehicles or people in the area. I made the decision to land on this road and committed myself to making it happen.

As soon as I knew I had a suitable landing site, I began to worry about whether the fire in the engine compartment was really out. Since I had plenty of altitude, I pushed the nose down and ran the airspeed up to about 160 knots for about 30 seconds to blow out anything that might still be burning. I then brought the airspeed back to best glide and set up for a normal left-hand pattern entry. As I was setting up on the downwind, I was much higher than normal. I figured I could burn the altitude off once I was set up on final. Keeping my landing spot in sight at all times; I turned base and then final in one smooth motion. I could tell by the crab angle on final that I had a pretty stiff crosswind coming from the west.

Once I was lined up and I knew I had it made with room to spare,

I double-checked to make sure all the flaps were deployed and then slipped the airplane hard into the wind to get rid of the extra altitude. I made sure that I shut off the master switch just before touchdown and popped the door open so I wouldn't get trapped in the plane if things went bad. As I entered the flare, I held the plane off the ground to bring the airspeed down to just above stall speed. I wanted to make sure that I touched down with as little speed as possible.

The touchdown was "solid", but not too hard. The dirt road was very rough and I concentrated on holding the nose up and stopping the plane on a straight line without veering off into the fields on either side. There was a two-foot deep ditch on either side of the road and I knew I would catch a wingtip and cartwheel out of control if one of the main wheels dropped into a ditch. Since I had plenty of road ahead of me, I avoided using the brakes and just kept the rudder going. The airplane rolled to a stop and I started to hop out when I realized I was on a pretty good upslope. I jumped back in and hit the brakes to stop it from rolling off the road. After firmly setting the parking brake, I hopped out to make sure the fire was out.

Within 5 minutes after I touched down, a Ventura County Sheriff's helicopter showed up and insisted on checking me out and even gave me an EKG test. My adrenaline was pumping, but I checked out just fine. They also helped me open the cowling to make sure there was no fire under the hood.

On inspection, we found that a clamp broke and allowed 1500-degree exhaust gases from the turbo-charger to bake the inside of the engine compartment. Attached are some pictures I took after things had settled down. Because I shut off the engine so quickly, there was very little actual damage. Some hoses and cables burned up, but nothing critical. If the situation had continued for awhile longer, it might have ruptured an oil line which would have provided fuel for the fire.

In thinking it through, there is nothing I could have done in advance that might have clued me into the fact that this particular clamp was going to fail on this particular flight. I do not believe that I could have picked this potential failure up during the pre-flight...even if I had visually inspected the clamp. Training and practicing power-off short approaches saved my bacon that day.



Mark McKibben is a very experienced mission pilot with CAP. He serves as the Deputy Commander for Hawker Senior Squadron 128 at Van Nuys and loves to fly with his dog, Tipper. His flight and landing were documented both by local newspapers and was mentioned in the evening news.